



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/936,752	09/17/2001	Reinhard Wagener	1999/G-003	9132
23416	7590	01/05/2004	EXAMINER	
CONNOLLY BOVE LODGE & HUTZ, LLP P O BOX 2207 WILMINGTON, DE 19899			POPOVICS, ROBERT J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1724	
DATE MAILED: 01/05/2004				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary**Application No.**

09/936,752

Applicant(s)WAGENER ET AL. **Examiner**

Robert J. Popovics

Art Unit

1724

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 October 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 10-21, 23, 24 and 27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 10, 11, 14, 16, 17, 23, 24 and 27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 12, 13, 15 and 18-21 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on 10/2/03 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

Claims **10-11,14,16-17, 23** and **27** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by **Binkley (US 5,106,556)**. Best illustrated in Fig. 8, Binkley discloses the use of a downcomer which is seen to meet the claimed limitations.

The rejection of claim **24** as set forth in the last Office Action is incorporated by reference, as if set forth in full.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 10/2/03 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant has argued, "Binkley discloses a method of mixing vapor and liquid in a distillation tower and an appliance ... Unlike either Binkley or Hedrick, the present invention as defined in the claims is directed to an appliance for separation of insoluble solid particles from a liquid employing a sedimentation process in combination with a countercurrent flow of washing liquid. Accordingly, it is fair to conclude that neither of the cited references relate to the subject matter specifically recited in the rejected claims. These claims make it abundantly clear that the washing medium is a liquid as opposed to a gas or vapor." This is not found persuasive, since the material worked on does not limit apparatus claims – see MPEP 2115. With respect to claim 24, it is noted that Applicant did not challenge the Examiner's assertion of "well known" status.

Art Unit: 1724

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims **12-13,15** and **18-21** objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Drawings

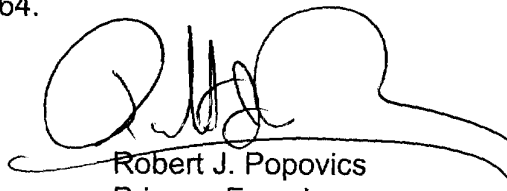
The drawings were received on 10/2/03. These drawings are approved.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Robert J. Popovics at telephone number (571) 272-1164.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Popovics', is written over a horizontal line.

Robert J. Popovics
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1724

December 29, 2003